Note: The Education Report can be viewed online at http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/news/report/

Issue No. 38

In The News

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Francophone Strongstart BC Centre Open for Preschoolers

Fruitvale Strongstart BC Centre Open for Preschoolers

Seismic Upgrades Make Langley Fine Arts School Safer

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Links

- Media Room
- StrongStart BC
- LearnNow BC
- School Choices
- Healthy Schools
- ReadNow BC
- School District Visits

Message from Minister Shirley Bond

Honourable Shirley Bond, Minister of Education

In elementary school, students learn essential skills, including the foundations of reading, writing and math. These skills enable them to achieve their best in later grades, post secondary study and the workplace.

That's why we assess these skills in grades 4 and 7 through the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA). This tool provides valuable information about how students are doing in the areas of reading, writing, and math. In turn, this information helps parents, teachers, schools, planning councils, boards of education, and provincial policy makers identify and develop strategies for supporting student achievement. Most importantly, the FSA provides parents with the individual results for their child.

That's why the Province recently improved the FSA. To better serve students and parents, individual student FSA scores are now available by early spring — long before the end of the school year. This gives parents time to review the results with their child and work with their child and his or her teacher to develop strategies for improvement.

This form of assessment has been in place for almost 10 years and experts, including B.C.'s own Representative for Children and Youth, have found it to be a useful tool. A number of boards of education and parent advisory committees have also expressed support for this tool. It is another way to ensure B.C. students are learning the essential skills they will rely on throughout life.

Province Recognizes Leaders in Education

To mark the end of Education Month 2008, Education Minister Shirley Bond honoured education leaders for their outstanding contributions to education in British Columbia. Award-winning principals, coaches, teachers, students and education partners were invited to attend a celebration at the legislature, where they received recognition for their dedication. Read more.

Front row, l-r: Michael Legault, Kassym Dorsel, Jérémy Desrochers, Samuel Daigle; middle row, l-r: Nicky Carroll, MLA John Nuraney, Minister of Education Shirley Bond, Manon Landry, Britta Gundersen-Bryden; back row, l-r: Carol MacWilliams, Rhonda Draper, Tarjeet Mann, David Betts, Laurent Brisebois, Michel Thibeault.

HOT TOPIC

British Columbia is leading the way in Canada when it comes to monitoring and improving Aboriginal student achievement. In fact, B.C. is the only jurisdiction that tracks the performance of Aboriginal students and two national newspapers recently singled this government out for praise concerning its care in monitoring and assessing these students.

Further, the Province has been working hard to help Aboriginal students achieve their best. There are now 36 Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements in place in B.C., bringing Aboriginal community partners and school districts together to address achievement issues and further engage Aboriginal students by developing a greater appreciation for Aboriginal culture in B.C. schools.

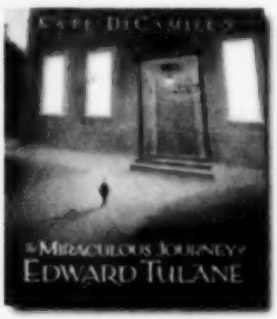
These agreements are paying dividends: higher student achievement and improved school completion rates. In fact, the Aboriginal completion rate for 2006/07 was 48 per cent, up five per cent from 2001. Aboriginal students have made important gains, but there is still more work to be done. The Province remains committed to working with Aboriginal communities and school districts to help Aboriginal students succeed.

Moving forward, the government will continue to support school districts as they determine the best way to improve student achievement in their unique communities. And the Province has passed historic legislation that recognizes participating First Nations' jurisdiction over education on First Nations' land in British Columbia. This legislation enables boards of education and independent schools to enter into education agreements with participating First Nations.

Helping Aboriginal students succeed in school is part of the government's commitment to ensure a quality education for all students.

Reading Corner

Edward Tulane is the favoured doll of the young, wealthy and adoring Abilene, and he is a little self absorbed. That is, until he is lost, and forced to learn how best to live in the larger world. Here, a simple story about a china rabbit surprises with its ability to inspire readers to remember the importance of love, compassion, and empathy for fellow beings. The book is suitable for readers in grades 4-5.



The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane
Kate DiCamillo